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TO R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.

SIR,—I am one of those who think that the publishing of parliamentary debates is a violation of the spirit of the English government; but, as long as the publication of these debates is tolerated, they appear to be a fair subject of *comment*, through the same channel that conveys them to the world; otherwise, matter calculated to do infinite injury, not only to the character of persons both in and out of the Legislature, but to the public weal, may, under the title of debates, be circulated, and if so circulated, must necessarily obtain belief.—Upon this principle it is, Sir, that I take the liberty to trouble you with a few remarks on a publication, which appeared in the *Morning Post* of the 10th instant, purporting to be a speech delivered by you, on the preceding day, in the House of Commons, on a motion for an address to his Majesty in consequence of his gracious message relative to preparations for war. Of this speech, or pretended speech, the passage to which I more particularly allude is this:—"We that opposed the peace, "said the Right Honourable Gentleman "(Mr. Windham), must be presumed to "be the persons most reluctant to renew "the war, because our strongest motive "and argument for condemning the peace "was, that it left us no means of resenting "future injuries, or, on whatever provo-"cation, of renewing future hostility. But "he went further still, for he declared, "that EVEN IF OUR EXISTENCE AS A "NATION WAS THE QUESTION, THE "PEACE HAD LEFT US WITHOUT ABI-"LITY TO MEET THE CONTEST. This "pusillanimous doctrine Mr. Sheridan re-"probated in terms of animated indigna-"tion *(accompanied by applauding cheers from "all parts of the House.)*—What, Sir, he said, "is this the language to hold atsuch a mo-"ment as the present? I have heard, indeed, "that the First Consul of France has mo-"destly proclaimed to the vassal Thrones "of Europe, that England is no longer "able to contend single-handed with "France—but I did not expect to hear "this sentiment re-echoed and acquiesced "in by a Member of the British Parlia-"ment (LOUD *and* INDIGNANT *cry of* "*hear! hear!*)—Mr. Sheridan proceeded to "say, that whatever were the motives of "that *new* reluctance to war, which seemed "so suddenly to have seized the Right "Honourable Gentleman, his reluctance "could not be more earnest and sincere "than his own was.—He deprecated war "from every feeling of his heart, and every "suggestion of his reason. He adjured "Ministers to try to their extent, what "temper, what conciliation, what even "concession, without forfeiture of honour, "could do;—but if all these sincerely at-"tempted should fail, and the dire neces-"sity of renewing the war should be forced "on us, *he would not endure* for a moment to "be told, that the energies of the country "were so exhausted, that we had no course "left but submission. No; he trusted, that "in spite of the audacious boast of the "First Consul, that it would be mani-"fested to him, and even to the Right Hon. "Gentleman, that there were still left "spirit and resources in British hearts, not "merely to protect the *existence* of their "country, but to avenge the *slightest insult* "*upon its honour*."—Now, Sir, I first assert, that Mr. Windham uttered no such sentiment as is here imputed to him. He did not say, that this country was, even in its present ruined and disheartened state, *unable, singly, to contend against France*; and, it follows of course, that your speech, as reported in this news-paper, is *a gross misrepresentation* of the sentiments of the Right Hon. Gentleman; which misrepresentation has been, I perceive, circulated through all the numerous channels of the press, and that, too, with uncommon pains and malignity.

But, Sir, upon the supposition that you did, on this occasion, speak the words ascribed to you, it seems to me not improper for any one to compare the opinion which they convey, with opinions before delivered by you, relative to the same subject. And here I beg leave to remind you of certain circumstances, in which I myself have some little concern.—After the

conclusion of the preliminaries of peace, and previous to the meeting of Parliament, you did me the favour to call at the shop, which I then kept, to enquire for a complete series of the letters which I had published on the peace. The series was not to be had, but I promised to send it when re-printed. I seized this opportunity to enforce, by some few remarks, the fearful truths which I had endeavoured to impress on the minds of the public, and to conjure you, by the love that you bore your country, to throw aside, in this her hour of distress, all party considerations, and to bend the whole force of your talents towards the prevention, while yet there was time, of the great and imminent dangers, to which not only her commercial and political interests, but also her independence and her very existence, were exposed. When my letters were re-printed, with the addition of those addressed to Mr. Addington, I did myself the honour to send you a copy, accompanied with a note, begging you to read them with attention, and expressing my hope that, whether I was right or wrong, you would be satisfied that I had, at any rate, some degree of reason, whereon to urge the soundness of my opinions, and the sincerity of my alarm.

I was not, indeed, vain enough to imagine, that what I had said, or what I had written, would produce any very great effect on you; but, I must confess, that, after your memorable declaration, your famous effusion of "*English feeling*," as the news-paper people phrase it, at the time when the country was called upon to resist the Northern Confederacy; I must confess that, when I recollected your having, on that occasion, declared that the *national flag ought to be nailed to the mast, and that we should triumph, or sink in the attempt*; I must confess that, when I adverted to that noble instance of your devotion to the honour of your country, I was astonished, utterly astonished and confounded, to hear your voice amongst those of the defenders of the preliminary treaty; to hear you say, that you were *glad* of a treaty that you could *not be proud of*; *glad* of a treaty "involving a *de-* "*gradation* of the national dignity, which "no *truly English heart* could feel with in- "difference*," a species of joy very little compatible, I thought, with that nice sense of honour, that lofty spirit, which would have counselled the sinking of the nation, rather than yield the right of rummaging the holds of neutral vessels, a right which the present ministers have, in reality, since surrendered, *without extorting from you one single word of censure!*

Having heard you express your *joy* at a measure, which you very explicitly and very justly described as "involving a *de-* "*gradation* of the *national dignity*," I was somewhat better prepared for your justification of the definitive treaty. Yet, as that compact contained so many and such striking deviations from the basis of the preliminaries, as its new concessions were so great and so shockingly disgraceful, and as France had, in the interim, made such fearful strides of ambition, I was still in hopes that, when the treaty came to be discussed, your "*English feeling*" would finally break forth. But, I was again disappointed. You still were glad. You styled the treaty, "a *degrading treaty*," a "*perilous* "*and hollow truce**;" and yet you concluded with a motion for an address to the King, expressing an opinion, that the "state of "affairs rendered peace so *necessary*, as to "*justify* the *important* and *painful sacrifices* "which his Majesty had been advised to "make for the attainment thereof†"—Thus, Sir, you declared most unequivocally, that a compact, which was *degrading*, *perilous*, and *hollow*, was, nevertheless, *necessary*.—From what, then, I pray you, Sir, did this imperious, this dire necessity arise? From the territorial aggrandisement of France, from the vast increase of her military means and power? or did it arise from the *decrease* experienced by us in these respects; or, from the falling off in our commerce, our credit, or our pecuniary resources? If not from these causes, it will, I imagine, be impossible for you to pretend, that from any other causes, the dreadful necessity, the *necessity of a disgraceful peace*, arose; and, not to trouble you with the detail of the question ‡, is there any one, having the least pretention to common sense, common observation, and common sincerity, who will deny, that all these causes are, in their several degrees, now more powerful than ever in their operation against our ability to wage war with France? How then, Sir, will you reconcile to reason, to duty, and, above all, to that consistency of which you profess to be so tenacious? how will you thus reconcile your *joy* at a *disgraceful peace*, then, with your lofty opinion of our *ability* now? You, who would have sunk the nation, rather than yield the right of searching neutrals; you, who would, in a contest for that object, have *nailed the flag*

* See Debates, Register, Vol. II. p. 1096.

* Debates, Register, Vol. II. p. 1360.
† Ibid, p. 1367.
‡ See Register, p. 347, for this detail.

to the mast, could not have *rejoiced* at a treaty by which *the honour of that very flag*, an honour handed down to us amongst the most precious and most sacred legacies of our forefathers, was *basely surrendered*; you could not possibly have rejoiced at a peace like this, unless you believed your country to be totally unable to continue the war; and, if you thought her *unable* to continue the war, "with all appliances and means to "boot," on what ground do you think her *able* to renew it, when stripped of the far greater part of those means?

Leaving you to answer these questions, Sir, I shall now proceed to make a few remarks on the remainder of the speech ascribed to you. You are made to say: "I deprecate war from every feeling of "my heart, and every suggestion of my "reason. I adjure the minister to try, to "their extent, what temper, what conci-"liation, what even *concession*, without for-"feiture of honour, can do." It does, then, strike you, Sir, that *concession* can still be made, "without forfeiture of honour?" And yet you "will not *endure* to be told, "that the energies of the country are ex-"hausted, and that there is no course left "but submission!" Mr. Windham did not say, or insinuate, that there was no other course left: he contradicted your construction of his meaning, though the news-papers did not insert his contradiction. But, supposing he had, with what degree of consistency could his assertion have been reprobated by him who had publicly declared his *joy* at a peace, "in-"volving a *degradation of the national dignity*," and who was willing to make *further concessions*, who was even now willing *to add to that degradation*, rather than go to war? Is it for such a man to rail against "*pusillani-*"*mous* doctrine?" Is it for such a man to impute pusillanimity to those who would have continued the war rather than have made the treaty of Amiens? The House, too, we are told, joined in a "*loud and in-*"*dignant cry of hear! hear!*" I rejoice at this mark of spirit, but I cannot forget, that the same cheering applause, the same "*loud cry of hear! hear!*" was bestowed on you, when you declared, that the peace was "what every man must be *glad* of, "but what no man could be *proud of*, as "being a peace involving a *degradation* of "the *national dignity*, which no truly Eng-"lish heart could feel with indifference." I cannot forget this, Sir, and, therefore, I am less disposed to envy you the honour of these animating cheers.—"Mr. Sheridan "trusted, that, in spite of the *audacious* "boast of the First Consul, it would be "manifested to him, and even to the Right "Hon. Gentleman, that there were still "left spirit and resources in British hearts, "not merely to protect the existence of "the country, but to avenge the SLIGHT-"EST *insult upon its honour*."

"Fine words! I wonder where you *stole* 'em!"

Not, surely, from those who *rejoiced* at a peace "involving *a degradation of the na-*"*tional dignity*;" but, probably, from those who reprobated that disgraceful feeling, which was most happily done by Mr. Grenville, in his speech on the preliminary treaty*. These fine words were not stolen from Mr. Addington, who said, that "ano-"ther campaign would have cost *forty* mil-"lions, and that even *certain success* would "not have been worth such a price;" who also told the House, that "the duty of ne-"gotiation begun when all hopes of *conti-*"*nental aid*, in checking the power of "France, *were at an end*†," and who has since explicitly declared, on several occasions, that England alone *cannot maintain a contest against France*. Nor did the voice of the people furnish these fine words; the deluded and debased people, who voluntarily became the cattle of Lauriston, and who insulted their Sovereign by drawing the republican emissary in triumph under the very windows of the palace of St. James; the grovelling, the selfish, the swinish multitude, who, in answer to the warnings of those who foresaw the present dangers, insultingly grunted in their ears, "*peace* and a *large loaf!*" Is it amongst these, Sir, that you expect to find those "*British hearts* to avenge the *slightest* "*insult* upon the honour of the country?"—Yes, Sir, these are fine words, but words, without corresponding actions, never, except the adversary be very contemptible, tend to any useful purpose. The Indians, who are great adepts in the hostile use of the voice, always reserve their war-whoop till they are ready to rush upon the foe. Bluster is as far from spirit as hypocrisy is from piety. The barking cur seldom gives more than a cowardly snap; whereas the silent, modest, brave and faithful race, which were once the symbol of Englishmen, and against which you and Mr. Wilberforce have sworn eternal hatred, attack without a menace, quit their hold but with their lives, and die without a groan. They want no *cheering*, Sir; no *halloo*; nothing to blind and intoxicate, nothing to lessen the magnitude of their

* Register, Vol. II. p. 1129.
† Ibid, p. 1149.

danger. They want no caressing, no coaxing, no flattering: they are not to be urged on by these low arts: the threat of their antagonist creates the combat, on which they enter with sober resolution, and from which they are not to be driven by blows, by hunger, or by loss of limbs. Here, Sir, is a picture of *real*, and mock, "*English* "*spirit*;" and most sincerely do I wish, that this first of national qualities may be found, at the present awful crisis, in the hearts of our countrymen. But, Sir, if it be not, if, contrary to my prayers, they should be found wanting in this their last means of protection against the ambition, the rapacity, and the tyranny of France, let not the evil be attributed to that handful of statesmen and of true patriots, who protested against that "*degrading treaty*" of which you were "*glad*."

Having trespassed so long on your time, Sir, I will venture a little further, in order to make an observation or two on the subject of *unanimity*, which you are represented as strongly recommending in the close of your speech. And here, let me ask, if you could possibly think your treatment of Mr. Windham's speech likely to contribute towards this most desirable object? There is a sort of unanimity, which some men produce by forcing all others to adopt their own opinions, and to acknowledge themselves their inferiors; but, as I imagine, you could scarcely hope to effect this object with regard to those noblemen and gentlemen, who compose what is called the New Opposition, it appears to me, that your unanimity must mean, an union of all others, to the exclusion of that Opposition. This union may possibly take place, and it may last for a little while. Nay, if the country can be saved by it, I wish it may last for ever; for I should be ashamed to think with men, who do not set the good of their country far above all other considerations. There are, too, some strong motives to such an exclusion. Both the Parliament and the people now clearly perceive the superior penetration, or the superior virtue, of the New Opposition, whose apprehensions and whose predictions have all been fulfilled; but, both the Parliament and the people recollect, that they rejected the counsel and derided the forebodings of these gentlemen, whose elevation to power would operate as an almost unbearable reproach on ninety-nine hundredths of the nation, who would instantly take the counsel, if they could, with any probability of success, be divided from the men. The New Opposition may, therefore, remain, as it were, [illegible] the Government, perfectly at their ease. When the hour of distress, of dire necessity, arrives, the reins of power will fall into their hands, and not one moment sooner; and, that this hour may never arrive must be the wish of every man, who had the courage to meet and to bear the odium of opposing the peace of Amiens. The conduct of these noblemen and gentlemen has, during the whole of their opposition, been such as every sensible and honest man must view with admiration. As, in their reprobation of the peace, they totally disregarded the popular clamour that was artfully and basely raised against them; as they were undepressed by the defeat of their great and memorable exertions, so have they discovered no elevation at the accomplishment of all they foretold. They have betrayed no marks of triumph, have repaid the reproachful with no reproaches, the insolent with no insults. They have, from the signing of the preliminaries to the present day, made no attempt to embarrass the ministers; and, if the public affairs suffer from any fault of theirs, it will be from that of their forbearance, which has, in my opinion, been, in several instances, carried much too far. I do not call upon you, Sir, to acknowledge the contrast which this conduct forms with that of the Old Opposition; but, I do trust, that it is perceived, and acknowledged with gratitude, by all those who yet retain a due sense of right and wrong, and a due regard for the welfare and honour of the country.—I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

London, 15 *March*, 1803. W. COBBETT.

ON LORD ST. VINCENT AND THE NAVY.

SIR,—What Lord St. Vincent's conduct has been when commanding a fleet at sea, forms no part of my present enquiry; but his conduct as First Lord of the Admiralty, and the conduct of those naval commissioners he has placed at that Board, I propose to inquire into. They were but a short time fixed in office when they began to *hint* at abuses existing in the different naval departments; the newspapers warmly took up the subject, and though mostly differing from each other in all other points, they were *unanimous* in the praise (some in the most fulsome terms) of this untried Admiralty. All stated the existing abuses as enormous; but congratulated the public on the prospect of their being speedily eradicated, as from the honour, integrity, and ability, of the *present* Board of Admiralty, every wise and just measure would be adopted to remove the evil. Finding this language become popular, the Admiralty spoke out more strongly, and these abuses became the constant subject of their conversation, and of their correspondence with the subordinate boards, always adhering to general terms and never specifying any thing. In short, a person unacquainted with the real state of this country and hearing this general cry of abuses in the navy, from those persons just placed at the head of it must naturally have concluded, that through the

whole of the long war just terminated, our navy had been disgraced and beaten in all parts of the world. That our ships had been sent out in a state unfit to keep the sea, and destitute of all description of stores, &c. that on investigation these melancholy events were to be attributed to the misconduct and corruption of the civil department of the navy, and the total negligence of the two former Boards of Admiralty, who had suffered such abuses to exist without taking the trouble to inquire into them. It was, therefore, left for the abilities of the present Board to discover the origin of our disasters, and for their integrity to find the remedy. But what is the real and notorious fact? Is there a dissentient voice in the country, when I assert that our fleets have been victorious in every part of the world, and have been enabled to keep the sea in all climes and in all seasons, and why? From the excellent state in which they were sent out from our Dock Yards, and from the regular supplies of stores and provisions furnished them from hence in all the various parts of the globe in which they have been serving. Does not the country know that we have had nearly 700 ships of war, and nearly 140,000 seamen! And can that system be radically bad which has enabled us to make such exertions? and is it possible there can have been great negligences where such exertions have been made? What then, it may be questioned, is the object of the present Admiralty in acting as they do? Why, by affecting to root out abuses, to gain popularity, to reflect upon their predecessors in office, and to obtain the sanction of the public to great changes they are desirous of making in the civil departments, by which they may get rid of persons obnoxious to themselves, and bring forward their own friends and dependents. These changes the First Lord did not wish to propose of himself, the job would be too glaring, and possibly his Majesty to whom such plans must be submitted in council might have objected, as his dislike of change and innovation (except upon strong grounds) is well known. The plan was, therefore, so soon as the alarum of abuses had been sounded long enough to take the public voice with him, to apply to Parliament to appoint commissioners to inquire into all the departments of the navy, who are directed not only to examine into the *abuses*, but also to propose *any changes*, to *any* extent, in *any* of the *departments*, even to the length of abolishing or creating offices. These commissioners are sent into the department of the greatest extent and magnitude in the country, of which none of them have the smallest previous knowledge, for the two naval commissioners can have no acquaintance with the *civil branch* of the service, and it would take a long time to give them the degree of knowledge necessary to carry on the business, and more than the longest time that can be possibly supposed for the duration of their commission to enable them to understand the system sufficiently to make it proper for them to propose measures for radically altering and amending it; a system established by James the Second, when Duke of York, with the assistance of that able man Pepys, his secretary, a system under which our navy has grown to its present magnitude and celebrity, and has been, and is, the admiration and envy of the world. These commissioners have been, mostly, nominated by the First Lord, their secretary is a *protégé* of Mr. Tucker, who is secretary to the First Lord, and their instructions are to be given from the King and Council, which is, in fact, from the First Lord, as he is to propose to the King and Council the instructions proper to be given to them. Thus circumstanced, appointed, and instructed, what report *can* be given by them, but such as is favourable to the views of the First Lord? But to return to the conduct of the Admiralty. They appear to have entered into office with the idea, that there is no such thing in existence as an honest man, and as their ignorance of the department over which they were appointed to preside, led them to believe every man in it had the *means* of defrauding the public, they took it for granted he made advantage of it. Therefore the whole tenor of their conduct, language, and correspondence to every board and individual under them was of the coarsest and strongest nature, and evidently calculated to shew their more than suspicions. At the same time it was understood, that all informations, anonymous or otherwise, from any source whatever, which could go to the accusation of any officer or person in trust, would be received with avidity by the Admiralty; this was of course taken advantage of by the lowest description of people, many of whom having been discharged from the different Dock Yards, had consequently borne enmity to the persons they conceived to have been instrumental to their discharge. Their information was immediately attended to, and committees of the commissioners of the navy sent down to inquire into the abuses stated. In most instances they appeared to have originated in malice, and to have little or no foundation; however, Lord St. Vincent was still so desirous of encouraging this mode of intelligence, that he directed a paper to be put up in Chatham Dock Yard, returning his thanks to an anonymous correspondent for his information. In some instances his lordship thought sufficient misconduct was brought home to some of the officers in the different yards to enable him to order their discharge. Mr. Marshall, the master shipwright at Plymouth, was one of the first victims to these informations. The charges against him did not, in any instance, impeach his integrity, and went only to attribute to him negligence, in particular points of which, his general conduct acquitted him. In his defence, he declared the weight of business in his department in time of war, was such as made it totally impracticable for any man to attend strictly to all the checks required by his office in his own person; he was necessitated therefore, in some instances, and in those which were now brought against him, to depend on his clerks, who, it appeared, had been guilty of misconduct. It was conceived, that Lord St. Vincent, who had, when in command of the western squadron borne the strongest testimony of approbation to Mr. Marshall's conduct, for his great exertions in supplying the fleet at Torbay, would on this occasion have attended to the representations made by some of Mr. Marshall's superior officers, who stated he was a most able and active servant of the public, and that his conduct had, for many years, been most praiseworthy; but, no; Lord St. Vincent's answer was (and it deserves to be recorded) that "*general* "good conduct was never to be set against *indi*- "*vidual misconduct.*" Thus fell Mr. Marshall. How his place has been supplied has already been noticed by you Mr. Cobbett in your Register, but may as well, perhaps, be shortly stated here. Mr. Joseph Tucker (the brother to Lord St. Vincent's late purser, but now secretary and commissioner of the navy) who a few months before had been in a most unconstitutional and unprecedented

manner, brought from the situation of a shipwright in a merchant's yard, and made *assistant to Mr. Marshall*, was appointed to succeed him, in preference to seventeen persons, who, at that time held the office of assistants to the master shipwrights, all of whom had been regularly educated and promoted in the King's Dock-Yards, and from which body it had been the invariable custom to select any new master shipwright to be appointed. The conduct of the First Lord on this appointment is worthy of notice; he called (as I have been informed) upon the Commissioners of the Navy, as the persons best acquainted with the characters and conduct of the Dock-Yard officers, to make a return of the names of those persons they considered best qualified to supply Mr. Marshall's place. These gentlemen returned him lists of names selected from the seventeen assistants above-mentioned. Mr. Tucker's name did not appear in any of them, as his character, both as an artificer and a man, was wholly unknown to them. It may be presumed his lordship *hoped* the Commissioners of the Navy would have inserted Mr. T.'s name in their lists, which would have justified him in selecting him, but his *hopes* were not answered. He was therefore obliged to appoint Mr. Tucker, in defiance of the recommendations he had himself desired. If I have been misinformed upon this subject, which I trust I have not, refutation can be easily given, but I believe I am not *materially wrong*. Mr. T.'s ignorance of his business, you Mr. Cobbett have already given an example of, in his conduct respecting the ship Mars. In his conduct respecting a quantity of timber he found in the Dock-Yard at Plymouth, which he proposed to the Navy-Board to have applied to inferior purposes, being, as he stated, wholly unfit for those it was laid in for; he attempted to fix a most heavy charge against his predecessor, Mr. Marshall, but the Board would not comply with the proposition, without ordering a strict survey of the timber to be held by certain officers (of whom Mr. Tucker was ONE); the result has been that *upwards* of four-fifths of that timber is reported fit for the uses for which Mr. Marshall received it! I have thought it right to go through the whole of one transaction, that you may form some idea of the conduct of the present Admiralty, and I can assure you, this is the character of every change they have made. The rigid severity with which every individual is persecuted on the slightest suspicion of blame, is such, that the whole of the Dock-Yards are panic-struck and paralysed: all those officers who have any means of subsistence independent of their situation, are retiring, preferring the smallest pittance to the being daily subject to this system of terror; amongst those that remain, all confidence is destroyed. No officer will venture to execute any order that is not defined in the clearest manner; instead of that zeal hitherto shewn for forwarding the public service, the object is now to do their duty in so exact a manner as shall save them from punishment; nor would any service, however pressing, be now forwarded till the most scrupulous attention had been paid to every minute form, that could preclude them from a future charge of inattention. The inconvenience arising from this is already experienced: the supplies of *timber* are stopped, and the respectable merchants, who have hitherto contracted with the Navy-Board for that article, declare they can do so no longer, while the present rigid system of receipt is continued. But should any unfortunate circumstance arise which shall require this country to make any sudden exertion, and to arm for its defence, then will it prove most fatal, and the full extent of the evil will be found, alas! too late; and we shall have nothing left us but to execrate the names of those persons, who, by their arbitrary conduct, violence, and partiality have deprived the country of her greatest and most glorious defence *.

Let us look back to the period when the late war broke out, and consider what the situation of the country was at that moment, and we shall see what may be done in bringing forward a fleet, when there is a man at the head of the naval department who has only the welfare of his country at heart, and whose wish is to protect and support those who are entrusted with the executive part of the service placed under his charge. The Earl of Chatham was then at the head of the naval department, and had been so for three or four years before. At that period, none of the various innovations and changes had taken place, which have since been carried to such an extent as has nearly changed the whole constitution of the civil department of the navy, and it is much to be feared will end in its destruction. His lordship saw the wisdom of the old institutions, and though strongly and most perseveringly solicited and pressed to sanction changes and innovations, steadily refused assent to them, and shewed, by the whole of his conduct, that he considered the establishments as he found them, perfectly competent to carry on the service, provided the different officers did their duty, and that they might have every encouragement to do so, he supported their consequence in their different departments, and held out every encouragement, by uniformly promoting the officers in the Dock-Yards, according to their character and length of service, without regard to interest or recommendation, and *in no instance* bringing in any person to a situation in the Dock-Yards, to the detriment of those already established there. Thus situated was our naval establishment when the war broke out, and the consequences were such as might be expected from so happy a state of things. The rapidity with which our fleet was equipped and sent to sea was *unprecedented*, and could not possibly have taken place, but for the zeal with which every officer, entrusted with any part of the service, exerted themselves. A very short enumeration of facts will prove this better than any laboured statement. On the 1st of December 1792, the number of men *actually* borne, including marines, did not amount to 12,000 men, with 17 sail of the line, and 25 frigates in commission; this was our situation, when the war broke out. In so short a space of time as *one month* our forces were increased to such a degree, that we find on the 1st of January 1793, the number of our seamen and marines borne, to be 18,000, without having recourse to press-warrants, which were not issued, till the month of February. At this period, we find 30 sail of the line and 51 frigates commissioned, the war not being then declared, and the preparations for armament having gone on but one month.

On the 1st of Jan. 1794, (thirteen months after these preparations began,) we find our naval force to consist of 96 sail of the line, and 106 frigates in commission, and nearly 77,000 seamen and marines borne. On the 1st of June in the same year our force was 99 sail of the line and 114 frigates in commission, and nearly 83,000 seamen and marines, and on that glorious day, Lord Howe, with

* Observe, this letter was written a *month ago*.

36 sail of the line, so effectually beat the French, that to this hour they have never met us in a fleet again. In fact our naval contest with France was that day decided and terminated. We might also look back to the exertions made by the naval department under this noble Lord prior to this war breaking out, and any person that will revert to the time of the Russian and Spanish armaments, will find as much cause for admiration in the manner our fleet was brought forward at those periods (and which most probably saved us from a war with those countries), as in the time just now alluded to.

Had the officers in the different departments of the navy been satisfied with the mere performance of their duty, what would have become of us? Fortunately it was far otherwise, and the zeal that was shewn by every individual in the service was in proportion to their confidence in the administration under which they acted; they knew they should be protected, they also knew that if faults of omission happened through the press of business, an allowance would be made for it; therefore, their first object was to forward the service with as much attention to every check that was necessary for their responsibility as possible, but at all events to forward the service.

What a different prospect is now before us, should the circumstances of the times call upon us for exertions in our naval department, may be collected from the picture I have given of the present state of our Dock Yards, and all the subordinate naval establishments; of the truth of which, if any person doubts, and will take the trouble to make enquiry, he will have too soon, alas! those doubts removed.

Fortunate would it have been for this country had the system of that noble Lord who directed our naval affairs at the commencement of the war been persevered in. His successor in office, certainly with the best intentions, but with a want of experience, listened too readily to the partizans of innovation who *immediately assailed* him, before it was possible for him to have formed an adequate idea of the nature and extent of that department over which he was placed, and unfortunately the changes he was induced by those persons to make were not of a trivial nature, but went to a total alteration of the constitution of the naval department, which he never could have designed, and which, if they had allowed him time for reflection, his good sense and abilities would have readily perceived. I allude in the first instance, to the appointment of a most expensive establishment under General Bentham, a man, perhaps, of some ingenuity, but certainly and notoriously of no science, a man who had past great part of his life in the military service of the Empress of Russia; why he quitted that service I cannot say certainly, not (I should suppose) with a view to his present situation, as it is beyond what his most sanguine hopes could have imagined. It is true, he had served his apprenticeship as a shipwright in one of the King's yards, before he set out to seek his fortune in Russia; but he could hardly expect the knowledge he had obtained in that time, would qualify him for the office of "*Inspector General* of all naval works," an office which was created for him with a large salary; what the extent of his powers are with his subordinate offices of *mechanist, chemist, builder*, &c. I cannot precisely state, as they seem to increase every day, thus much is certain, that on their establishment they superseded all the legitimate powers exercised in the Dock Yards by the Navy Board, the Surveyors of the Navy, and all the Dock Yard offices on the subject of building, maintaining, and repairing all docks, slips, warehouses, and every description of *civil architecture*. The plan of improvement which had some years before been formed by the ablest engineers, civil and military, that the country produced, which had been sanctioned by the Privy Council, and was in regular yearly progress towards completion, was set aside, as it were by *acclamation*, and why? Not for the purpose of bringing forward another well digested plan, but to make a clear coast for this enterprizing, speculating General, whose genius must not be cramped, as any restriction might marr a plan expected to be infinitely superior to what the united efforts of all our scientific men had been able to produce. Unfortunate is it for the country, when the heads of departments consider *all change* as *improvement*, it is, alas! too much the spirit of these times. To shew the innumerable bad effects which have been the consequence of this unnecessary and ill advised innovation, would far exceed the limits of a letter already much too long. Suffice it to say, that though the noble Lord's intentions were good who introduced it, and he intended to stop when he had accomplished what he thought desirable, not reflecting that he had by breaking in so essentially upon old establishments, without any imperious necessity for so doing, made a precedent, which those who succeeded him might carry to any extent they desired, and his successors have taken advantage of it. What the whole of their plans are, has not yet been divulged, but from what they have done, and what they appear to be now doing, it is my decided opinion, that if the present Admiralty is not speedily removed, the sun of the British Navy is set for ever.——I am, Sir, AN ENGLISHMAN.

Plymouth, 11 *Feb.* 1803.

BOB AND THE DOCTOR.

A New Song to an Old Tune.

I sing not of conquests by Britons obtain'd,
The battles they fought, and the honours they gain'd;
Their conquests by land, and their conquests by sea,
Though subjects for fame—are no subjects for me.
Derry down, &c.

I sing not of peace to our country restor'd;
For the dove brought no olive, though sheath'd was the sword:
Yet Bob and THE DOCTOR, in positive tone,
To Israel cry'd peace—when peace there was none.

Our pacific hostility's blessings I sing,
That anomalous, non-descript, negative thing;
That truce full of terror, of doubt, and submission,
That fraternal embrace, in a hostile position.

Cornwallis, great *service* to render the state,
To Amiens was sent with a *service* of plate:
There he feasted, and slept, and the Consul, so civil!
To amuse the good Lord, sent his punch and the Devil.

There they treated his Lordship with all sorts of fun,
Taught some new Christmas games to the peer and his son:

Thus the winter went off—and no business went on,
For my Lord look'd in vain for *Mynheer* and the *Don*.

But at length, the definitive treaty was clos'd,
New concessions demanded—new terms were impos'd,
New insults were offer'd—redress was deny'd,
And the state reciprocity—all on one side.

You've heard that that "safe politician," the Devil,
Prefers darkness to light, 'cause "his actions are evil."
But Bob and the Doctor, those politic wights,
Though dark lanthorns themselves, made us put up our lights.

Pharsalia was fatal to freedom and Rome,
Pultowa to Charles prov'd the seal of his doom;
Little York * robb'd *Great* Britain of part of her state,
But the treaty of Amiens decided her fate.

In vain o'er the waves did her thunder-bolts roll,
Her glory in vain reach'd from Ind to the Pole.
Those tones of "bold thunder" were chang'd to submissions,
And her heroes disarm'd—by our "safe politicians."

Honest Robin, we know, in a grand gasconade,
Talk'd of marching to Paris—by way of crusade;
Then, reluctant, his march he was fain to forego,
Now he trembles—because Buonaparté cries—*Bob!*

And the Doctor, alarm'd at this *fee, faw*, and *fum*,
Though "all things to all men," looks confoundedly glum;
For he sees—whilst his hungry *relations* are fed,
The *relations* of peace and of amity fled.

Now in safety they bid us no longer repose,
And would rouse the old lion again from his doze;
They have pared down his nails, and dismantled his jaws,
Yet they now bid him shew both his teeth and his claws.

But should that old lion, grown tir'd of submission,
Be rouz'd to a sense of his wretched condition,
Both the Doctor and Bob would be hurl'd to that station,
From whence they were rais'd—for the sins of the nation.

Reading, March 13, 1803. CANDIDUS.

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* The town of *York* in Virginia, which, to distinguish it from the other Yorks in America, is called *Little York*, was the place where Lord (now Marquis) Cornwallis, surrendered himself and his army prisoners of war, and, by that capitulation, severed, from Great Britain, thirteen flourishing colonies, and put the finishing stroke to the success of a revolution, which was the precursor of the revolution of France, and which will, I greatly fear, finally produce the destruction of Britain herself. The negotiation of the treaty of Amiens could not, most assuredly, have been committed to a person more worthy of the task. "I am wrong," said Mr. Pitt, in his defence of the preliminaries, "I am wrong in particularizing India, as the theatre of the noble "marquis's exertions, for there is scarce a *quarter* "*of the globe*, in which this country has not derived *important services* from the exalted *talents* "and virtues of that noble person, who is now "about to receive his reward, in putting the "finishing hand to a treaty, which will *give* "PEACE *to the world*, after a war in which he "had so *large a share* in *averting* from this country "the dangers that threatened the most vulnerable "part of our possessions!!!!!" (*See Debates*, Register, *Vol. II.* p. 1139.)

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS, from p. 268.

3. *A Journal of the Forces which sailed from the Downs, in April* 1800, *on a Secret Expedition under the Command of Lieutenant-General Pigot, till their Arrival in Minorca; and continued through all the subsequent Transactions of the Army under the Command of Sir Ralph Abercromby, in the Mediterranean and Egypt; and the latter Operations under the Command of Lord Hutchinson, to the Surrender of Alexandria. With a particular Account of Malta, during the Time it was subject to the British Government. By Æneas Anderson, Lieutenant of the 40th Regiment. Illustrated by a Variety of Maps, Plans, Views, &c. &c.* 4to. pp. 532. Debrett.—After giving the title of this volume at length, little more remains for us to say, than that we have carefully examined its contents, and have risen from a perusal of it, with a conviction that it is an authentic narrative of the operations it professes to relate. The account of Malta will be found particularly interesting; it is unquestionably the best description of that island, its cities, towns, fortifications, public buildings, harbours, climate, language, physical circumstances, produce, trade, &c. &c. that has yet appeared in this country. We warmly recommend a perusal of it to our readers at the present moment: after which, we are persuaded they will be of Mr. Dundas's opinion—that "*the minister who should give* "*up Malta would deserve to forfeit his head.*" The engravings are numerous and well executed.

FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Constantinople, Feb. 15.—The retinue of the French Ambassador, General Brune, who has arrived here, and had a conference with the Reis Effendi, after which he had a formal audience of entry of the Grand Seignior, consists of sixty persons, among whom are several interpreters. In the same squadron with this suite have likewise arrived twelve persons, whom the government has sent as commercial commissioners to the different provinces of Turkey, and who have been already acknowledged by the Porte in that capacity, and will immediately set out for the several places of their destination.—Lord Elgin has gone on board an English frigate, in which he will return to

London. Though he has given official notice of the withdrawing of the English troops from Egypt, the Turks do not expect that this will take place for three or four months; that is to say, not till the Convention with the Beys has been carried into effect.—When Lord Elgin sailed from this harbour, which was in the night, he fired a salute of seventeen guns, which occasioned a general alarm here, as cannon are never fired here in the night, except in the case of some great calamity or insurrection. The Reis Effendi had previously requested Lord Elgin to omit the ceremony of a salute at his departure, and has now delivered to Mr. Stratton a note of complaint and remonstrance on the subject.—The Porte has this day appointed Haleb Effendi, a man of prepossessing manners, its ambassador to Paris.

Genoa, Feb. 12.—Accounts from Rome, of the 5th instant, say that an English courier from London had passed through that city on his way to Naples.—We also learn from Bologna, of the date of the 13th, that a French commissary, preceded by a courier, had passed in great haste through that city for Florence. The latter accounts likewise add, that a French half brigade from Modena had arrived at Bologna, and that, as it was said, several corps of French troops in Italy were in motion, and about to march for different ports on the Mediterranean.—Besides the Polish corps, troops from the Italian Republic are embarking at Genoa for St. Domingo.

Paris, March 8.—Gen. Brune, Ambassador of the French Republic to the Sublime Porte, arrived at Constantinople the 21st of January.—His squadron was composed of 6 ships, large and small, one of which was a ship of the line. He has been received by the Capitan Pacha. The Vizier and the Divan have sent him presents, and his reception has been attended with the utmost solemnities. The news of his arrival has spread joy throughout the whole empire.—The Commissaries for Foreign Affairs in all the trading towns of the Levant, have obtained firmans, and have departed for their destination on board the different small vessels of the squadron.—All the commercial relations of the French have resumed in the trading towns of the Levant their ordinary course. They have reason to flatter themselves at the support they have received from the Turks. On the demand of General Stuart, the Porte has granted to the Mamalukes that part of Upper Egypt composed of Sevan and Senne.—The Capitan Pacha daily expects news of the evacuation of Alexandria.—*Moniteur.*

March 10.—Letters from Brest, of the 2d March, state, that the expedition for the East-Indies was to sail in a few days: it is composed of the Marengo, of 74 guns, the frigates Atalante, la Belle Poule, la Semillante, le Côte d'Or, and the transport la Marie Françoise. The troops embarked consist of one battalion of the 109th demi-brigade of the line, of one of the 18th light infantry, a company of light artillery, and a company of Swedes, some artizans, and the corps of officers of two battalions of Seapoys, who are to be formed in India.

French tiers consolidés, March 10th, 61 f. 25 c.—11th, 61 f. 60 c.—12th, 60 f. 30 c.

DOMESTIC.

On the 7th inst. W. Lee and W. Roukesley, both of Sheffield, were tried at the York Assizes, before Judge Rooke, for having feloniously administered an oath to W. Simmet of Chesterfield, to engage in a conspiracy, formed for the purpose of disturbing the public mind. The first witness proved that Roukesley solicited him to become a member of their society; he was told that those who would not go would be made to go; that if any fell in the contest, there was a provision made for their wives and families; that they were to fight against any that came against them; that there were more than 1000 in Sheffield; that R. was what was called a conductor, that Lee was a chief; that the witness, his brother, and R. went to Lee's house, when an oath was administered to the witness and his brother by Lee; that they were sworn to keep the secrets of the society; that R. told him the object was to overthrow Parliament, to make this a free nation, and to rule themselves; that in August, R. gave orders to a man to make some pikes; that he had heard R. say, that a letter had been intercepted at the Post-Office from London, which had led to a discovery; that, therefore, it was necessary to secrete the arms; that R. and another went to a wood near Sheffield, after having previously put the arms in a chest, and buried the chest in the ground; that he afterwards went with the constable to the place where this box had been secreted, and that it was there found, &c. The above evidence was corroborated by several other witnesses. The box, containing the instruments, was produced; they were about three times the size of a carving knife blade, and edged on both sides like a dagger.

The jury immediately found the prisoners *guilty*. The sentence of seven years transportation was then passed upon them.

(A correct report of this Trial will be given in the Supplement to Vol. 1.)

A mutiny lately broke out on board his Majesty's ship the Excellent, at Barbadoes. By the active exertions of the Hon. Capt. Stopford, and his officers, with the prompt assistance of the royal marines, it was soon quelled. Four of the ringleaders were tried and executed; and the boatswain was tried and dismissed the service.

PARLIAMENTARY MINUTES.

Friday, March, 4.—COMMONS.—Sir W. Elliot presented a petition from the ship owners of Newcastle.—The chairman of the committee for trying the merits of the petition on the contested election for Penryhn, reported that the sitting member was duly elected.—Mr. Calcraft moved "that "this house, anxiously desirous to give full effect "to the important recommendation contained in "his Majesty's most gracious message of the 16th "of February, do appoint a select committee to "request and demand information concerning "those incumbrances that impede His Royal High"ness the Prince of Wales from complying with "the object of his Majesty's message by resuming "immediately that state, dignity, splendour, and "rank, to which he is entitled."—A debate of considerable length ensued. The speakers were Messrs. Calcraft, Erskine, Fuller, Cartwright, Buxton, Curwen, Hilliard, Johnstone, Lascelles, Geary, Dent, Burdon, Tierney, Addington, Fox, Grosvenor, Lord Stanley, Mr. Canning, Mr. Golding, Mr. Sheridan, Lord Hawkesbury, Sir J. Wrottesley, Mr. W. Smith, and Lord Castlereagh.—A division took place: for the motion 139.—Against it 184.—Majority against the motion 45.—*The Debate, together with a correct list of the minority, will be preserved in our Supplement to Vol.* 3.

Monday, March 7.—LORDS.—The Irish appeal cause of Lloyd *v.* Grady was argued at considerable length.—Irish Revenue Officers' Bill, and Bill

for preventing vexatious arrests read a second time.

COMMONS.—Scotch Cotton Manufacturers' Bill. and Bill for preventing forgeries on the Bank of Ireland, read a first time.—Irish Law Court Assimilation Bill, and Irish Revenue Perpetuation Bill read a second time.—Mr. Fox brought up the Report from the Committee appointed to try the merits of the Petition, complaining of an undue Election for Stanraer, &c. in Scotland. The Report stated, that J. S. Gordon, Esq. was duly elected, and R. S. Agnew not duly elected; but that the petition was not frivolous or vexatious.—Irish Stamp Duty, Hat Duty, Game Certificates, Postage, and City of Dublin Watch Bills, were read a second time.—Prince of Wales' Annuity Bill read a third time and passed.—Marine Mutiny Bill read a first time.

Tuesday, March 8th.—LORDS.—Lord Hobart presented a message from the King, for which see Commons.—Prince of Wales' Annuity Bill read a first time.

COMMONS.—Mr. Dan. Houston presented a petition from certain master-manufacturers in Scotland against the Scotch Cotton Manufacturers' Bill. —Mr. Owen, from the India House, presented at the Bar an account of the nett produce of the Revenue of India, &c.—Lord W. Russel brought in a Bill for paving, widening, extending &c. certain streets in Southwark and Surrey.—Read a first time.—Sir R. Milbank brought up a report of the Committee appointed to try the merits of a petition, complaining of an undue election for Bridgewater. It stated, that the Committee had declared that G. Pocock, Esq. and Jeffery Allen, Esq. the sitting members, were duly elected; but that the petition was not frivolous or vexatious.—Mr. H. Browne reported from the Nottingham Election Committee, that Frederic Shuttleworth had been guilty of prevarication and contradiction in giving his evidence before that Committee.—Ordered into custody of Serjeant at Arms.—Mr. Addington brought down the following

MESSAGE FROM HIS MAJESTY.

" George R.—His Majesty thinks it necessary " to acquaint the House of Commons, that as " very considerable military preparations are carrying on in the ports of France and Holland, he " has judged it expedient to adopt additional " measures of precaution for the security of his " dominions. Though the preparations to which " his Majesty refers are avowedly directed to colonial service, yet as discussions of great importance are now subsisting between his Majesty and the French government, the result of " which must at present be uncertain, his Majesty " is induced to make this communication to his " faithful Commons, in the full persuasion, that " whilst they partake of his Majesty's earnest and " unvarying solicitude for the continuance of " peace, he may rely with perfect confidence on " their public spirit and liberality, to enable his " Majesty to adopt such measures as circumstances may appear to require, for supporting " the honour of his crown, and the essential interests of his people."

Mr. Addington moved, that his Majesty's Message be taken into consideration to-morrow. Ordered —Irish Maiming and Cutting Bill read a second time.

Wednesday, March 9.—LORDS.—Counsel were heard on the Irish appeal, Lloyd v. Grady.—On the order of the day, for taking into consideration his Majesty's Message, being read, Lord Hobart rose to move an Address to his Majesty on the occasion, which, after a short debate, was voted *nem. con.* The speakers were Lords Hobart, Spencer, Grenville, Moira, Westmoreland, and Auckland.

COMMONS.—Mr. Erskine informed the House, that he had authority from his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, to request the noble Lord Porchester, not to pursue the notice he had given, with respect to an additional grant to the Prince of Wales; in consequence of which Lord P. consented to withdraw his motion for the present. On the order of the day for taking into consideration his Majesty's Message being read, Mr. Addington rose to move the Address. A debate ensued, in which the speakers were, Mr. Addington, Mr. Fox, Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Windham, Mr. Sheridan, Mr Canning, Mr. T. Grenville, the Attorney-General. *(This debate, together with that of the Lords, will be preserved in our Supplement.)* The question was put and carried *nem. con.*—Mr. Addington gave notice, that on Friday next, he should move for an increase of 10,000 seamen and marines.

From the London Gazette.—St. James's, March 10, 1803.—This day M. de. Lima, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from his Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Portugal, had an audience of leave of her Majesty; and the Chevalier de Souza Couttinho, his successor in the same character, had his first private audience of his Majesty.

BANKRUPTS. — Richardson, J. Pocklington, sheep-jobber.—Macaulay, J. Liverpool, merchant. —Sales, J. Liverpool, broker.—Ayres, R. Liverpool, dealer in earthen-ware.—Goring, J. and E. Johnstone, St. Mary Axe, merchants.—White, T. the younger, Strood, coal-merchant.—Spalding H. Melfield, grocer. — Martin, G. Suffolk-street, watchmaker.—Harris, T. Waltham, Holy Cross, pin-maker.—Edwards, S. Manchester, cotton-spinner.—Harker, D. Winchcomb, soap-boiler.—Morphew, W. Rotherfield, dealer in corn.—Barker, J. Cumberland, wood-monger.—Hunt, T. Leather-lane, hardwareman.—Simpson, W. Clements-lane, merchant.—Nicoll, J. G. Hackney-road, bricklayer.—Ballanger, T. Tiverton, inn-holder.—Shepard, J. Bristol, hosier.—Bourne, H. St. James's-street, silk mercer.

DOMESTIC OFFICIAL PAPERS.

A Proclamation, for encouraging Seamen and Landmen to enter themselves on Board his Majesty's Ships of War.

G. R.—Whereas, it is Our Royal intention to give all due encouragement to all such seamen and landmen who shall voluntarily enter themselves in our service: we have thought fit, by and with the advice of our Privy Council, to publish this our Royal Proclamation: and we do hereby promise and declare, that all such able seamen not above the age of 50, nor under the age of 20 years, fit for our service, who shall, on or before the 30th of April next, voluntarily enter themselves to serve in our Royal Navy, either with the Captains or Lieutenants of our ships, or officers employed in tenders or at rendezvous on shore, for raising men for the service of our Navy, shall receive, as our royal bounty, the sum of £3 each man; and all such ordinary seamen fit for our service, who shall so enter themselves as aforesaid, shall receive the sum of £2 each man; and all such able-bodied landmen, not above the age of 35, nor under the age of 20 years, who shall so enter themselves as aforesaid, shall receive the sum of £1 each man, as our royal bounty; such respective sums to be

paid them by the respective clerks of the check residing at the ports or places where the ships into which they shall be entered, shall be, immediately after the third muster of such seamen and landmen:—And we do declare, that the qualifications of the seamen and landmen so entering themselves as aforesaid, shall be certified by the Captain, Master, and Boatswain of the ship or vessel where they shall enter. And for preventing any abuses by any persons leaving the vessels to which they shall belong, and entering themselves on board any other our ships or vessels, in order to obtain the said bounty money; we do hereby declare and command, that such seamen and landmen belonging to any of our ships or vessels as shall absent themselves from any of the said ships or vessels to which they shall belong, and shall enter themselves on board any other of our said ships or vessels, in order to obtain the said bounty, shall not only lose the wages due to them in the ships or vessels they shall leave, but also be severely punished according to their demerits.—Given at our Court, at the Queen's House, the 7th day of March, 1803, and in the 43d year of our reign.—God save the King.

A Proclamation, for recalling and prohibiting Seamen from serving Foreign Princes and States; and for granting rewards for discovering such Seamen as shall conceal themselves.

G. R.—Whereas we are informed, that great numbers of mariners, and seafaring men, our natural-born subjects, are in the service of divers Foreign Princes and States, to the prejudice of our kingdom; we have thought it neces-ary, by and with the advice of our Privy Council, to publish this our royal proclamation; and do hereby strictly charge and command all masters of ships, pilots, mariners, seamen, shipwrights, and other seafaring men whatsoever and wheresoever (being our natural-born subjects), who are in the pay or service of any foreign Prince or State, or do serve in any foreign ship or vessel, that forthwith they, and every of them, do (according to their known and bounden duty and allegiance) withdraw themselves, depart from, and quit such foreign services, and return home to their native countries: and further, we do hereby strictly prohibit and forbid all masters of ships, pilots, mariners, seamen, shipwrights, and other seafaring men whatsoever (being our natural-born subjects), from entering, and do charge and command them, and every of them, from henceforth to forbear to enter themselves into the pay or service of any foreign Prince or State, or to serve in any foreign ship or vessel whatsoever, without our special licence first had and obtained in that behalf; to all which we expect due obedience and exact conformity; and we do hereby publish and declare, that the offenders to the contrary shall not only incur our just displeasure, but be proceeded against for their contempt according to the utmost severities of the law: and we do hereby declare, that if any such masters of ships, pilots, mariners, seamen, shipwrights, or other seafaring men, (being our subjects,) shall be taken in any foreign service by the Turks, Algerines, or any others, they shall not be reclaimed by us as subjects of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland: and we do hereby further promise and declare, that a reward of twenty shillings for every able and ordinary seaman fit to serve on board our ships shall be paid any person who shall discover any seaman or seamen who may conceal him or themselves, so that such seaman or seamen shall be taken for our said service by any of our sea officers employed for raising men, on or before the 30th of day April next; the said rewards, to be paid for any seaman or seamen so discovered and taken in or about London, by the principal officers and commissioners of our navy; and at the out-ports by the naval officers, (where there are any), and (where there are no naval officers), by the collectors of our customs, immediately upon a certificate being produced to the said principal officers and commissioners of our navy, naval officers, or collectors respectively, by the person who may make discovery of any seaman or seamen as aforesaid, certifying his name, and the name or names, and number of seamen procured in consequence of his discovery; the said certificate to be given by such officer as may take such seaman or seamen for our service.—Given at our Court at the Queen's House, the 7th day of March, 1803, and in the 43d year of our reign.—God save the King.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

FINANCE AND THE FUNDS.—In our last, p. 343, we alluded to the financial display of Lord Auckland, and expressed our distrust of the efficacy of that species of force, on which his Lordship seemed to place his whole reliance. In our opinion, no error is so dangerous, as this, which has, during the last twenty years, been gradually possessing itself of the minds of the nation, and which, at last, led to the treaty of Amiens. Every one could see that that ignominious compact involved, as Mr. Sheridan truly observed, "a *degradation* of the *national dignity*," but yet most people, like Mr. Sheridan, were "*glad of*" it, because they thought that it would contribute to swell the size of that "pyramid of gold," which they vainly imagined would, at all times, and under all circumstances, be a sufficient protection. In order, therefore, to destroy this deadly error, we have frequently endeavoured to show the fallacy of those statements, by which it was kept alive and propagated through the country; and, we feel ourselves much obliged to Lord Auckland, who (though without intending perhaps), has enabled us to set the state of the revenue in its true light, by the accounts he has procured to be laid before the House of Lords. These accounts, which were, it would appear, intended to vindicate the credit of the nation against the assertions of the French calculators, have, in the opinion of every sensible observer, answered no other purpose than that of completely exposing the mistatements and fallacies, and, of course, the ignorance or the duplicity, of the budget speech, by which Mr. Addington hoped to recopcile the public to his shadowy and evanescent peace, a hope, in which the credulous stockholders know, to their sorrow, was not entirely disappointed.—Lord Auck-

land's papers contain an account of the *actual receipts* of the year, up to the 5th of January last, together with estimates of what ought to be the produce of the taxes laid last year, and only received for the two last quarters. The result is as follows:

Nett permanent revenue including corn bounties	£28,246,677
Land Tax unredeemed	1,380,271
Annual Malt Tax	624,350
Estimate of further produce Taxes, 1802	2,827,783
Profit on the Lottery, 1802	373,000
	33,449,081
Deduct 827,783, because Lord A. cannot fairly calculate the produce of the Taxes of 1803 at more than 4,000,000, seeing that, in the half year to January last, they produced only 1,900,437	827,783
	32,621,298
Deduct permanent charge on Consolidated fund	24,631,931
Remains actual surplus	7,989,367

We refrain, at present, to take any notice of the other items in Lord Auckland's accounts, because they do not consist of items of *receipts*, but of such as are the creatures of a fond imagination, and are merely intended to bolster up a defective statement, upon exactly the same principle that an American debtor places, upon the list of his property, lands, rivers, and trees, which have no existence, except it be in the moon.—The real surplus, therefore, of the revenue to January last (according to actual receipts) applicable to national purposes, appears to be £7,989,367, which when compared with the statements made by Mr. Addington in that celebrated speech *, which his modest assurance led him to publish in a pamphlet, and which, according to the opinion of the wiseacres of the old opposition, gave him an eighteen years lease of the Treasury Bench, presents a very considerable deficiency. Our readers will recollect, that he calculated the produce of the revenue upon the average produce to October last, and that he took the applicable surplus for the year 1803 as follows †:

Land and Malt	£2,750,000
Surplus consolidated fund	6,500,000
Lottery	500,000
	9,750,000
Deduct actual receipts to Jan. last	7,989,367
Deficiency for 1803	1,760,633

For the year 1804 we shall find the deficiency still greater. In Mr. Addington's statements, respecting the revenue for that year, the modest man says, "his opinion is not lightly formed, for that he has "thought it his duty to investigate the "grounds of it, with all the minuteness "and attention in his power," and, the result of this *minute investigation* was thus stated: *

Land and Malt	2,750,000
Surplus Consolidated Fund,	7,845,000
Lottery	500,000
	11,095,000
Deduct actual receipts to Jan. last	7,989,367
Deficiency for 1804	3,105,633

The produce of the taxes for the year to January last was the greatest ever known; and, we have heretofore given our reasons for believing, that there is no prospect of its ever being exceeded in amount. At any rate, it is never fair to make a calculation of any future permanent produce upon the year of the *greatest* receipt *alone*, but upon an average of several years. We will, however, take, as the criterion, this greatest year of produce, and give Mr. Addington the advantage of it; yet, even this greatest year falls short of his calculations, for the current year, £1,760,633; and, for the next year £3,105,633!—This statement it was, on which Mr. Addington had the modest assurance to demand the *confidence* of the public, and his right to general popularity and support! And this is the minister, to whom the guardianship of the interests and honour of Great Britain is confided in a crisis the most arduous ever experienced by any nation upon earth!——The items of Lord Auckland's statement, which we have excluded from the credit side, are, first, £133,105, increase of bills and balances, which ought not to have been included, because it is an increase naturally derivable from an increase of revenue. 2d. £232,097 beer duties *postponed*. This is a repetition of the species of financial legerdemain, detected and exposed by us on a former occasion. † In taking the produce of revenue, the only rule to be safely followed is that of *actual receipt within the year*; for, when once this practice is deviated from, there is no end to litigation as to what items should be accounted for in one period, and what in another. 3d. £883,461, increase of charge for bounties and drawbacks, which arise from an increase of trade, and, as increase of trade produces increase of revenue, if you deduct the increase of drawbacks, you ought also to deduct the increase of the trade and revenue by which the for-

* See Register, Vol. II. p. 778. † Ibid. p. 780.

* See Reg. Vol. II. p. 781. † See Vol. III. p. 86.

mer increase was produced. 4th. £142,711, increase of *bonded* sugars, which item might be allowed, if the consumption of sugar had decreased in the year to January last; but, as the consumption has increased, the increase of the bonds is attributable to an over importation alone, and not to a reduced consumption.——The fact is, that Lord Auckland, though he may have very good intentions, does not understand finance, on which subject, if he wishes not to injure the credit of the country, we would, with all becoming humility, advise him, in future, to be perfectly silent. We refrain from those observations, which might be made on his comparison of our *present* with our *former* resources; but, we do hope and trust, that the House of Commons, instead of giving the Richmond-Park Minister an "eighteen years lease of the Treasury-Bench," will institute an enquiry into the matter. The minister has laid before them an estimate for two years, exceeding the result deducible from the actual produce of the existing taxes by near *five millions*; and, immediate steps ought to be taken, either to confirm the solidity of this estimate, or to show its fallacy, and thereby let the people see what they really and truly have to expect.—It has been, as our readers can witness, our constant maxim, that, as to this point as well as every other, the people should be, at all times, *fairly and fully informed of their situation:* we have uniformly reprobated all attempts to lead them blindfolded, to hide their danger from them, and to "keep up their spirits," as it is called, by *bluster* or by *deception*; for, it is our sincere and well-weighed opinion, that such a system, which, by the by, the ministry are at this moment practising upon the Parliament and the Nation, must, if persevered in, end, at no very distant period, in utter dismay, confusion, and destruction. When, on a former occasion, we thought it, upon this our fixed principle, a duty incumbent on us, to controvert the minister's statements, there were not wanting persons to accuse "the Grenvilles" of inconsistency, in representing the country as being nearly a bankrupt after having asserted that she was able to continue the war. In the first place we know not whether those noblemen and gentlemen, designated by "the Grenvilles," honoured our opinions with their concurrence; 2dly, if they did, they did not thereby agree in representing the nation as nearly a bankrupt, because our opinions led to no such conclusion; 3dly, supposing them to agree in this representation upon the prospects presented by a peace which was, in fact, an everlasting war, it did not follow that the same opinion would have applied to a war which might have been *put an end to*; and, 4thly, if it had even necessarily followed, from the representation attributed to them, that the war must have produced a national bankruptcy, still they might, as we now do, maintain, that a war which would have produced a national bankruptcy, was preferable to a peace which, if persevered in, will produce a national bankruptcy and subjugation into the bargain.—On the occasion, to which we allude, and in which our sentiments were thus grossly and basely misrepresented, we cautioned the patriots of 'Change Alley not to rely on the minister's word; and, are they not already sorry that they did not follow our advice? The minister, too, we cautioned against the effects of his magnified and vapouring statement. We advised him to restrain his propensity to pompous display. We asked, in speaking of the *safe* politicians, "are they quite sure that it "was prudent to indulge (on the subject of "the increase of their resources) in their "*proud exultation*, and to '*hope their state-*"*ments would be published in France?*' Are "they quite sure, that they shall not have "cause to repent of their shop-keeper-like "wit, their purse-proud exultation? The "coward," we added, "never should cry "roast-meat. The goose with the golden "eggs should steal silently from her nest *." —On the subject of the last flaming budget, we said: "Mr. Addington may be well "assured, that the statement which has "charmed the patriots of 'Change Alley, "will make a good deal of *mauvais sang* at "St. Cloud †." Accordingly, we see, that the French official gazette has *resented* the boastings of which we complained; and, it is by no means improbable, that the mere indulgence of the vanity and pomposity of this man may, at bottom, be the principal cause of that panic and that expense, which have now come upon us, and which will, as the least possible evil, produce a considerable and lasting depreciation in the national credit. *Uncertainty* is the bane of credit, and that this feeling now prevails, to a degree never before experienced in this country, will be denied by no one, who has not some sinister motive for lulling the public asleep, or seeks not for temporary fame by dealing out blustering, rabble-rousing speeches. No stock holder has scarcely any thing worthy of the name of

* Register, Vol. II. p. 378.
† Ibid. p. 795.

confidence left in his mind: the dealing in that species of property is fast becoming a mere game at hazard, the pregnant source of disappointment, mortification, ruin, beggary, disaffection, disloyalty, and sedition.

" There is a gulph, where thousands fell,
" Here all the bold adventurers came,
" A narrow sound, though deep as hell;
" 'CHANGE-ALLEY is the dreadful name.

" Nine times a day it ebbs and flows;
" Yet he that on the surface lies,
" Without a pilot seldom knows
" The time it falls, or when 'twill rise.

" Now bury'd in the depth below,
" Now mounted up to heaven again,
" They reel and stagger to and fro,
" At their wits end, like drunken men *."

Dreadful as is this picture, it will soon be verified in every part, unless prevented by war, by another war, *a successful war against France*, which, we repeat it again and again, is the only possible means of recovering that military and political confidence, with which pecuniary confidence is inseparably connected.

ARMY AND NAVY.—The ability of waging this war we have, though in a degree greatly diminished since the peace. Besides the strong places which we have given up, and that to France, too, we have sent adrift a numerous and well-disciplined militia, for the express purpose, it would appear (for there is no other that can be imagined) of taking, in their stead, as many as we can get together, of raw and undisciplined men, to the disturbance, distress, and misery of private families, as well as to the great injury of agriculture and manufactures. This is so evident, that, in any other time, we should think an explanation of our meaning unnecessary; but, the reproach of disheartening the people, which the " *safe* politicians" pour out on every one, who attempts to show the evil consequence of their ignorance and selfishness, induces us to say, that it is not the calling out of the militia, which we represent as a hardship; it is not what the people ought to bear of which we complain, but we complain, and we have a right to complain, of every thing which they and which the service suffer merely from the blindness or the perverseness of those who hold the reins of government, and who assumed those reins upon the condition of *responsibility*. Twenty thousand men are instantly wanted for foreign service; not for hostile expeditions, but for the *defence* of our colonies, the very best of which (Jamaica) will, if war should be the result, be attacked in less than two months from this day. These twenty thousand men could have been spared, if our militia had not been disembodied. Now we cannot spare a man, to say nothing of our want of more than we have for the defence of our home dominions, especially in Ireland, where there does not yet even exist a law for raising a militia.—As to the fleet, the improvident and disorganizing measures of the " *safe* politicians" are still more fatally manifest. The minister assured the Parliament, that *fifty* ships of the line could be got ready for sea in a month! *Six*, at the utmost, is all that could, in any possible emergency, at this moment, go out of harbour! And, of the 50,000 seamen, voted in November, not one half are yet raised, to say nothing of the 10,000, voted the other day, and who will never, we fear, have an existence, in his Majesty's service, except upon paper. * The " *safe* politicians" have, in no inconsiderable degree, annihilated the materials, of which this glorious navy was composed. We last week stated, that *seven* thousand of our seamen had gone into the service of France, but, from accounts which we have since received, we are much afraid, that they amount to *double* that number. The naval artizans are now sought after and caressed by the Admiralty, by that same Admiralty, whose haughty and insolent satellites spurned them from their presence, and who sent them to beg or to starve. Some of the people who received this brutal treatment, have been regained, and they are hurried down to the distant Dock-Yards *by the coach*; but, great numbers of them have gone to France, where they are now employed, preparing the future means of their country's destruction. While men like these have the management of public affairs, what hope can be entertained by any reasonable man?—In spite, however, of all these disadvantages, a war, in proper hands, if instantly begun, upon a good system, and having a determinate object, might be waged against France with success. There is yet a sufficiency of means, but there wants the soul and the talents to call them forth, to put them in motion, and to direct them to their proper ends. We have heard, indeed, and we have heard it with inexpressible satisfaction, that the first Lord of the Admiralty and " his two Phocæ" are about to be removed;

* Swift.

* For a contrast to the conduct of the present Board of Admiralty, we beg leave to refer our readers to p. 396, where they will see what exertions the naval department was capable of at the commencement of the last war. From the same article they may also perceive the amazing difference between the naval establishments of the last and the present peace.

but, if they are to be replaced by other "*safe* politicians," the public will gain but little by the change. *Something*, however, it must gain; for, it is absolutely impossible, that three other such Naval Lords should be found in any part of the ship, from the poop to the bowsprit.

WAR OR PEACE?—This is the question now, as it was in October last, and we will still answer *peace*, if the present ministry exist. They know the country would not trust them with a war: it would deserve to be burnt up if it did; and, they are resolved to keep their places to the latest moment that they can hang on, with any chance of safety to themselves. They have put up with injury upon injury, insult upon insult, ignominy upon ignominy, till they have made their country a by-word and a reproach amongst the nations; and, our readers may be well assured, that they did not make the present shew of resistance, upon any other consideration than that of their *own safety*. They must long have known the intentions of Buonaparté; they would have made any further sacrifices to pacify him; but, they, at last, were persuaded that he was actually about to make an attack, and then they became alarmed for *themselves*, fearing, that, if his Majesty should awake some morning and find himself no longer the sovereign of Ireland, ministerial *responsibility* might become something more than a mere pompous sound. It is possible, therefore, that their fears may have magnified the danger of invasion. When a coward turns his head towards his enemy, he always either shuts his eyes or sees double; two most admirable properties in a statesman, for the former of which we have already paid most dearly, and we are now, perhaps, to suffer for the latter.

—As to the object of the negotiation, or pretended negotiation, it is impossible for us to say precisely what it is; but this we well know, that, if it be any remnant of the treaty of Amiens, it is of far less importance than many of the sacrifices already made and completed by that treaty. Malta is, too, of infinitely less importance than Louisiana, and the ministers are ready and willing to suffer the French to depart for that colony, even before the point with respect to Malta and Egypt is settled! Nay, it would appear from the message, that they would regard as a proof of a *pacific* disposition the departure of the French troops to the neighbourhood of Jamaica, which is much more vulnerable than Ireland itself. Such is the state to which this peace has reduced us, that we think about nothing but our own domestic, nay, almost, our *personal* safety. We were formerly sensible to the slightest blow in the limbs, and even in the extremities of the empire; but, having been kicked and bruised, having become "a most vile and "beaten thing," we seem to have no wish remaining but that of preserving our lives. We have seen it stated, and in print too, that Buonaparté *yielded* in the affair of the *indemnities* and of *Switzerland*; and, if that really was yielding, we are fully persuaded he will yield now. *Reculer pour mieux sauter* is, too, an art which the Corsican perfectly understands. "The tiger," said Mr. Pickering to the Americans, "always "*crouches* before he leaps upon his prey;" and, we beg our readers to be assured, that if Buonaparté draws back at present so far as to furnish the "*safe* politicians" with a plausible pretext for keeping their places a little longer, he will, at no great distance of time, fall upon this country with a force which she will not be able to resist.—The *Moniteur*, copies of which we have received to the 15th instant, seems also to strengthen the opinion we have formed on this subject. It contains the King's message, without any remark upon it; and this state paper, which operated like a thunder-stroke on the funds of this country, had, when the last advices came away, produced, as will be seen by our stock-table, very little depression in those of France. The cause of this, however, we cannot, without more information, fully ascertain.

THE MECHANICAL MINISTRY.—But, besides many other forcible reasons for Buonaparté's patching up the present dispute, there is one, which alone, we think, must decide him so to do; and that is, he must know, that the present ministry would, in case of actual war, be instantly driven out of place, and he must also know, that, if the whole British dominions, in every quarter of the world, were ransacked, another set of men, of whatever country or colour, could not be found so exactly fitted to the purpose of maintaining with him "*the relations of peace and* "*of amity.*" Negroes would have mutinied fifty times under the treatment, which they have patiently and silently received at his hands. If war, or any other cause, should ever bring their precious diplomatic transactions to the light, the people of this country, if they have any sense or feeling left, will die with shame at having been governed by such men. Lord Carlisle, to whom the nation is indebted for the first

warning it received, respecting the dangers to be apprehended from these "*new* and "*untried* ministers," has lately most happily described them as being a *machine*, formed by Mr. Pitt. "I will not," said his lordship, "call them an *infernal machine*, but I "will say, that they have proved infinitely "more destructive to their country, than "that machine was to the buildings and "the people of Paris." Shamefully, indeed, was the nation insulted in the construction of this machine, which is hardly worthy the hand of even a journeyman politician. One of the wheels was soon taken out and replaced by another. What further repairs will take place, what further mending and patching, what further nails, and pegs, and bolts, and cleets, and braces will be used to hold together this feeble and rickety frame, it would be presumption in us to predict; but, the public must, by this time, be well convinced, that, unless it be knocked to pieces, in a very short time, it will work the complete destruction of the British monarchy.—The Corsican is said to have grossly insulted Lord Whitworth. We deeply lament that our Sovereign should be exposed to insult, in the person of his representative; but, what else was to be expected, when the tame and degrading conduct of the ministers was taken into consideration? It is to their pusillanimity, their propensity to crouch at his feet, that we are to attribute the insolence of Buonaparté! "He were "no wolf, but that he finds them to be "sheep." As Lord Temple observed, "they attract danger and disgrace, as con-"ductors attract lightning; as blunt con-"ductors, which attract most strongly, and "spread the mischief most widely."* They are always in a state of uncertainty: not one of them can even guess, now at this moment, whether we shall have war, or not: their councils are full of doubt and of indecision: they are continually balancing between the fear of losing their places and that of incurring the *responsibility* attached to those places:

..... "Whate'er their doubtful hands
"Attempt, confusion straight appears behind,
"And troubles all their work. Through many a
"maze,
"Perplex'd they struggle, changing every part,
"O'erturning every purpose; then, at last,
"Sit down dismay'd, and leave the entangled scene
"For scorn to sport with....."†

* See Debates, Register, Vol. II. p. 1690.
† Akenside.

The Dey of Algiers has, it would seem, fallen out with his brother of Paris, whether upon points of *faith* or of *morality* we know not, but two French frigates have been sent to protect the ships of that nation against the corsairs of the Dey.—It is stated that, by the consent of the Emperor of Russia, the Bavarian *langue is suppressed*, in the Order of Malta. What, then, becomes of our treaty?—Intelligence from Constantinople states, that the suite of General Brune consists of *sixty* persons, who, like the commercial agents here, are destined for different parts of the Turkish empire.——The French expedition to the East Indies sailed from Brest on the 6th instant. *Linois* is the Vice-Admiral commanding the ships, and DECAEN the Captain-General. The squadron consisted of 1 ship of the line and 3 frigates. Transport-vessels were to join them from Bourdeaux and L'Orient. The number of troops is not stated in the French papers; but, we have good authority to state, that they are upwards of seven thousand in number, and are to *touch* at that "free-port," the Cape of Good Hope, where we strongly suspect they will never suffer an English ship to touch again. But, this sailing of expeditions from France can be no cause of umbrage to our ministers. Those "*safe* politicians," on the contrary, must, according to the words of the message, regard such expeditions as a ground for putting a stop to our warlike preparations. So that, if the enraged Buonaparté will best leave us in the quiet possession of this "nice little tight little Island," he may ravage all the world besides; for, as to *colonies*, Dr. Beeke has clearly proved, that the trade between Manchester and London is of much more *quick return* as well as more *safe* and more *profitable*, than the trade *between London and Jamaica!!!!!!* And this, this is one of the men, whose opinions are the guide of the British minister!—From Petersburg it is intimated, that Buonaparté has consented to certain propositions, which the Emperor had made relative to Malta and to a provision for the king of Sardinia. Should this be so, here is an additional reason for believing that our dispute with France will be *patched up*; because we well know, that the concessions, which the Emperor required from the Consul, formed one of the grounds, on which the "*safe* politicians" built their hopes of success from the present shew of vigour. As to Malta, too, the fate of that island seems to have been taken entirely *out of our hands*. The Emperor of Russia is the arbiter. What he consents to we cannot, without war, refuse to sanction.

We particularly call the attention of our readers to the article in our present Number "*On Lord St. Vincent and the Navy.*" From its extreme length, we were under the necessity of printing it in a smaller character than usual, which, we trust, its author will kindly excuse.

Our Correspondent X. will see that, it was not in our power to insert his valuable *observations occasioned by his Majesty's late Message to Parliament* this week, but he may rest assured that they shall speedily be attended to.

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